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A FRENCH ETON.

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PART I.

A LIVELY and acute writer, whom English society, indebted to his vigilance for the exposure of a thousand delinquents, salutes with admiration as its Grand Detective, some time ago called public attention to the state of the "College of the Blessed Mary" at Eton. In that famous seat of learning, he said, a vast sum of money was expended on education, and a beggarly account of empty brains was the result. Rich endowments were wasted; parents were giving large sums to have their children taught, and were getting a most inadequate return for their outlay. Science, among those venerable towers in the vale of the Thames, still adored her Henry's holy shade; but she did very little else. These topics, handled with infinite skill and vivacity, produced a strong effect. Public attention, for a moment, fixed itself upon the state of secondary instruction in England. The great class which is interested in the improvement of this imagined that the moment was come for making the first step towards that improvement. The comparatively small class whose children are educated in the existing public schools thought that some inquiry into the state of these institutions might do good. A Royal Commission was appointed to report upon the endowments, studies, and management of the nine principal public schools of this country—Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Charterhouse, St. Paul's, Merchant Taylors', Harrow, Rugby, and Shrewsbury.

Eton was really the accused, although eight co-respondents have thus been summoned to appear with Eton; and in Eton the investigation now completed will probably produce most reform. The reform of an institution which trains so many of the rulers of this country is, no doubt, a matter of considerable importance. That importance is certainly less if it is true, as the *Times* tells us, that the real ruler of our country is "The People," although this potentate does not absolutely transact his own business, but delegates that function to the class which Eton educates. But even those who believe that Mirabeau, when he said, *He who administers governs*, was a great deal nearer the truth than the *Times*, and to whom, therefore,

changes at Eton seem really important, will hardly be disposed to make those changes very sweeping. If Eton does not teach her pupils profound wisdom, we have Oxens-tiern's word for it that the world is governed by very little wisdom. Eton, at any rate, teaches her aristocratic pupils virtues which are among the best virtues of an aristocracy—freedom from affectation, manliness, a high spirit, simplicity. It is to be hoped that she teaches something of these virtues to her other pupils also, who, not of the aristocratic class themselves, enjoy at Eton the benefit of contact with aristocracy. For these other pupils, perhaps a little more learning, as well as a somewhat stronger dose of ideas, might be desirable. Above all, it might be desirable to wean them from the easy habits and profuse notions of expense which Eton generates—habits and notions graceful enough in the lilies of the social field, but inconvenient for its future toilers and spinners. To convey to Eton the knowledge that the wine of Champagne does not water the whole earth, and that there are incomes which fall below £5,000 a year, would be an act of kindness towards a large class of British parents, full of proper pride, but not opulent. Let us hope that the courageous social reformer who has taken Eton in hand may, at least, reap this reward from his labors. Let us hope he may succeed in somewhat reducing the standard of expense at Eton, and let us pronounce over his offspring the prayer of Ajax: "O boys, may you be cheaper educated than your father, but in other respects like him; may you have the same loving care for the improvement of the British officer, the same terrible eye upon bullies and jobbers, the same charming gayety in your frolics with the 'Old Dog Tray'; but may all these gifts be developed at a lesser price!"

But I hope that large class which wants the improvement of secondary instruction in this country—secondary instruction, the great first stage of a liberal education, coming between elementary instruction, the instruction in the mother tongue and in the simplest and indispensable branches of knowledge on the one hand, and superior instruction, the instruction given by universities, the second and finishing stage of a liberal education, on the other—will not imagine that the appointment of a Royal Commission to report on nine existing schools can seriously help it to that

which it wants. I hope it will steadily say to the limited class whom the reform of these nine schools (if they need reform) truly concerns—*Tua res agitur*. These nine schools are by their constitution such that they profess to reach but select portions of the multitudes that are claiming secondary instruction; and, whatever they might profess, being nine, they can only reach select portions. To see secondary instruction treated as a matter of national concern, to see any serious attempt to make it both commensurate with the numbers needing it and of good quality, we must cross the Channel. I understand that the Royal Commissioners have thought themselves precluded, by the limits of their instructions, from making a thorough inquiry into the system of secondary instruction on the Continent. They will, no doubt, have collected some information upon this subject; for to accomplish perfectly their own duties, even in the narrowest view of them, would be impossible without it. But this information they will have collected either through the English embassies abroad, or by means of private and unofficial inquiry. I regret that they did not trust to the vast importance of the subject for procuring their pardon even if they somewhat extended their scope, and made their survey of foreign secondary instruction exact. This they could only have done by investing qualified persons with the commission to seek, in their name, access to the foreign schools. These institutions must be seen at work, and seen by experienced eyes, for their operation to be properly understood and described. But to see them at work the aid of the public authorities abroad is requisite; and foreign governments, most prompt in giving this aid to accredited emissaries, are by no means disposed to extend it to the chance inquirer.

In 1859, I visited France, authorized by the Royal Commissioners who were then inquiring into the state of popular education in England, to seek, in their name, information respecting the French primary schools. I shall never cease to be grateful for the cordial help afforded to me by the functionaries of the French Government for seeing thoroughly the objects which I came to study. The higher functionaries charged with the supervision of primary instruction have the supervision of secondary instruction also; and their kindness enabled me occasionally to see something of the secondary schools—

institutions which strongly attracted my interest, but which the Royal Commissioners had not authorized me to study, and which the French Minister of Public Instruction had not directed his functionaries to show me. I thus saw the lyceum, or public secondary school, of Toulouse—a good specimen of its class. To make clear to the English reader what this class of institutions is, with a view of enabling him to see, afterwards, what is the problem respecting secondary instruction which we in this country really have to solve, I will describe the Toulouse lyceum.

Toulouse, the chief city of the great plain of Languedoc, and a place of great antiquity, dignity, and importance, has one of the principal lycées to be found out of Paris. But the chief town of every French department has its lyceum, and the considerable towns of every department have their communal colleges, as the chief town has its lyceum. These establishments of secondary instruction are attached to academies, local centres of the Department of Public Instruction at Paris, of which there are sixteen in France. The head of an academy is called its “rector,” and his chief ministers are called “academy-inspectors.” The superintendence of all public instruction (under the general control of the Minister of Public Instruction at Paris) was given by M. Guizot’s education-law to the academies; that of primary instruction has been, in great measure, taken away from them and given to the prefects; that of secondary or superior instruction still remains to them. Toulouse is the seat of an academy of the first class, with a jurisdiction extending over eight departments; its rector, when I was there in 1859, was an ex-judge of the Paris Court of Cassation, M. Rocher, a man of about sixty, of great intelligence, courtesy, and knowledge of the world. Ill-health had compelled him to resign his judgeship, and the Minister of Public Instruction, his personal friend, had given him the rectorate of Toulouse, the second in France in point of rank, as a kind of dignified retreat. The position of rector in France much resembles that of one of our heads of houses at Oxford or Cambridge. M. Rocher placed me under the guidance of his academy-inspector, M. Peyrot; and M. Peyrot, after introducing me to the primary inspectors of Toulouse, and enabling me to make arrangements with them

for visiting the primary schools of the city and neighborhood, kindly took me over the lyceum, which is under his immediate supervision.

A French lyceum is an institution founded and maintained by the state, with aid from the department and commune. The communal colleges are founded and maintained by the commune, with aid from the state. The lyceum of Toulouse is held in large and somewhat gloomy buildings, in the midst of the city; old ecclesiastical buildings have in a number of towns been converted by the Government into public-school premises. We were received by the *proviscur*, M. Seignette. The provisor is the chief functionary—the head master—of a French lyceum; he does not, however, himself teach, but manages the business concerns of the school, administers its finances, and is responsible for its general conduct and discipline; his place is one of the prizes of French secondary instruction, and the provisor, having himself served a long apprenticeship as a teacher, has all the knowledge requisite for superintending his professors. He, like the professors, has gone through the excellent normal school out of which the functionaries of secondary instruction are taken, and has fulfilled stringent conditions of training and examination. Three chaplains—Roman Catholic priests—have the charge of the religious instruction of the lyceum; a Protestant minister, however, is specially appointed to give this instruction to pupils whose parents are of the reformed faith, and these pupils attend, on Sundays, their own Protestant places of worship. The lyceum has from three to four hundred scholars; it receives both boarders and day-scholars. In every lyceum which receives boarders there are a certain number of *bourses*, or public scholarships, which relieve their holders from all cost for their education. The school has three great divisions, each with its separate schoolrooms and playground. The playgrounds are large courts, planted with trees. Attached to the institution, but in a separate building, is a school for little boys from six to twelve years of age, called the *Petit Collège*; here there is a garden as well as a playground, and the whole school-life is easier and softer than in the lyceum, and adapted to the tender years of the scholars. In the *Petit Collège*, too, there are both boarders and day-scholars.

The schoolrooms of the lyceum were much like our schoolrooms here; large, bare rooms, looking as if they had seen much service, with their desks browned and battered, and inscribed with the various carvings of many generations of schoolboys. The cleanliness, order, and neatness of the passages, dormitories, and sick-rooms, were exemplary. The dormitories are vast rooms, with a teacher's bed at each end; a light is kept burning in them all the night through. In no English school have I seen any arrangements for the sick to compare with those of the Toulouse Lyceum. The service of the *infirmary*, as it is called, is performed by Sisters of Charity. The aspect and manners of these nurses, the freshness and airiness of the rooms, the whiteness and fragrance of the great stores of linen which one saw ranged in them, made one almost envy the invalids who were being tended in such a place of repose.

In the playground the boys—dressed, all of them, in the well-known uniform of the French schoolboy—were running, shouting, and playing, with the animation of their age; but it is not by its playgrounds and means of recreation that a French lyceum, as compared with the half-dozen great English public schools, shines. The boys are taken out to walk, as the boys at Winchester used to be taken out to *hills*; but at the end of the French schoolboy's walk there are no *hills* on which he is turned loose. He learns and practises gymnastics more than our schoolboys do; and the court in which he takes his recreation is somewhat more spacious and agreeable than we English are apt to imagine a *court* to be; but it is a poor place indeed—poor in itself and poor in its resources—compared with the *playing-fields* of Eton, or the *meads* of Winchester, or the *close* of Rugby.

Of course I was very desirous to see the boys in their schoolrooms, and to hear some of the lessons; but M. Peyrot and M. Seignette, with all the good-will in the world, were not able to grant to an unofficial visitor permission to do this. It is something to know what the programme of studies in a French lyceum is, though it would be far more interesting to know how that programme is practically carried out. But the programme itself is worth examining: it is the same for every lyceum in France. It is fixed by the Council of Public Instruction in Paris, a body in which the State, the Church, the French Academy,

and the scholastic profession, are all represented, and of which the Minister of Public Instruction is president. The programme thus fixed is promulgated by the minister's authority, and every lyceum is bound to follow it. I have before me that promulgated by M. Guizot in 1833; the variations from it, up to the present day, are but slight. In the sixth, or lowest class, the boys have to learn French, Latin, and Greek grammar, and their reading is Cornelius Nepos and Phædrus, and along with the fables of Phædrus those of La Fontaine. For the next, or fifth class, the reading is Ovid in Latin, Lucian's Dialogues and Isocrates in Greek, and *Télémaque* in French. For the fourth, besides the authors read in the classes below, Virgil in Latin and Xenophon in Greek, and, in French, Voltaire's *Charles XII.* For the third, Sallust and Cicero are added in Latin, Homer and Plutarch's *Moralia* in Greek; in French, Voltaire's *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, Massillon's *Petit carême*, Boileau, and extracts from Buffon. For the second class (our fifth form), Horace, Livy, and Tacitus, in Latin; in Greek, Sophocles and Euripides, Plato and Demosthenes; in French, Bossuet's *Histoire Universelle*, and Montesquieu's *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains*. The highest class (our sixth form) is divided into two, a rhetoric and a philosophy class; this division—which is important, and which is daily becoming, with the authorities of French Public Instruction, an object of greater importance—is meant to correspond to the direction, literary or scientific, which the studies of the now adult scholar are to take. In place of the Pindar, Thucydides, Lucan, and Molière, of the rhetoric class, the philosophy class has chemistry, physics, and the higher mathematics. Some instruction in natural science finds a place in the school course of every class; in the lower classes, instruction in the elements of human physiology, zoölogy, botany, and geology; in the second class (fifth form), instruction in the elements of chemistry. To this instruction in natural science two or three hours a week are allotted. About the same time is allotted to arithmetic, to special instruction in history and geography, and to modern languages; these last, however, are said to be in general as imperfectly learned in the French public schools as they are in our own. Two hours a week are devoted to the correction of composition. Finally, the New Testament,

in Latin or Greek, forms a part of the daily reading of each class.

On this programme I will make two remarks, suggested by comparing it with that of any of our own public schools. It has the scientific instruction and the study of the mother-tongue which our school course is without, and is often blamed for being without. I believe that the scientific instruction actually acquired by French schoolboys in the lower classes is very little, but still a boy with a taste for science finds in this instruction an element which keeps his taste alive; in the special class at the head of the school it is more considerable, but not, it is alleged, sufficient for the wants of this special class, and plans for making it more thorough and systematic are being canvassed. In the study of the mother-tongue the French schoolboy has a more real advantage over ours; he does certainly learn something of the French language and literature, and of the English our schoolboy learns nothing. French grammar, however, is a better instrument of instruction for boys than English grammar, and the French literature possesses prose works, perhaps even poetical works, more fitted to be used as classics for schoolboys than any which English literature possesses. I need not say that the fitness of works for this purpose depends on other considerations than those of the genius alone and of the creative force which they exhibit.

The regular school lessons of a lyceum occupy about twenty-two hours in the week; but among these regular school lessons the lessons in modern languages are not counted. The lessons in modern languages are given out of school hours; out of school house, too, all the boarders work with the masters at preparing their lessons; each boarder has thus what we call a private tutor; but the French schoolboy does not, like ours, pay extra for his private tutor; the general charge for board and instruction covers this special tuition.

Now I come to the important matter of school fees. These are all regulated by authority; the scale of charges in every lyceum and communal college must be seen and sanctioned by the academy-inspector in order to have legality. A day-scholar in the Toulouse Lyceum pays, in the lowest of the three great divisions of the school, 110f. (£4 8s. 4d.) a year; in the second division he pays 135f.

(£5 8s. 4d.); in the third and highest division, 180*l.* (£7 4s. 2d). If he wishes to share in the special tuition of the boarders, he pays from £2 to £4 a year extra. Next, for the boarders. A boarder pays, for his whole board and instruction, in the lowest division, 800*l.* (£24) a year; in the second division, 850*l.* (£26); in the highest division, 900*l.* (£36). In the scientific class the charge is £2 extra. The payments are made quarterly, and always in advance. Every boarder brings with him an outfit (*trousseau*) valued at 500*l.* (£20); the sum paid for his board and instruction covers, besides, all expense for keeping good this outfit, and all charges for washing, medical attendance, books, and writing materials. The meals, though plain, are good, and they are set out with a propriety and a regard for appearances which, when I was a boy, graced no school-dinners that I ever saw; just as, I must say, even in the normal schools for elementary teachers, the dinner-table in France contrasted strongly, by its clean cloth, arranged napkins, glass, and general neatness of service, with the stained cloth, napkinless knives and forks, jacks and mugs, hacked joints of meat and stumps of loaves, which I have seen on the dinner-table of normal schools in England. With us it is always the individual that is filled, and the public that is sent empty away.

Such may be the cheapness of public-school education, when that education is treated as a matter of public economy, to be administered upon a great scale, with rigid system and exact superintendence, in the interest of the pupil and not in the interest of the school-keeper.* But many people, it will be said, have no relish for such cast-iron schooling. Well, then, let us look at a French school not of the state pattern—a school without the guarantees of state-management, but also without the uniformity and constraint which this management introduces.

A day or two after I had seen the Toulouse Lyceum I started for Sorèze. Sorèze is a vil-

* *L'administration des lycées est complètement étrangère à toute idée de spéculation et de profit*, says the Toulouse prospectus which lies before me: "A lyceum is managed not in the least as a matter of speculation or profit;" and this is not a mere advertising puff, for the public is the real proprietor of the lycéums, which it has founded for the education of its youth and for that object only; the directors of the lyceum are simple servants of the public, employed by the public at fixed salaries.

lage in the department of the Tarn, a department bordering upon that in which Toulouse stands; it contains one of the most successful private schools in France, and of this school, in 1859, the celebrated Father Lacordaire was director. I left Toulouse by the railway in the middle of the day; in two hours I was at Castelnaudary, an old Visigoth place, on a hill rising out of the great plain of Languedoc, with immense views towards the Pyrenees on one side and the Cevennes on the other. After rambling about the town for an hour I started for Sorèze in a vehicle exactly like an English coach; I was outside with the driver, and the other places, inside and outside, were occupied by old pupils of the Sorèze school, who were going there for the annual *fête*, the *Spécches*, to take place the next day. They were, most of them, young men from the universities of Toulouse and Montpellier; two or three of them were settled in Paris, but, happening to be just then at their homes, at Beziers or Narbonne, they had come over like the rest: they seemed a good set, all of them, and their attachment to their old school and master was more according to one's notions of English school life than French. We had to cross the *Montagne Noire*, an outlier of the Cevennes; the elevation was not great, but the air, even on the 18th of May in Languedoc, was sharp; the vast distance looked gray and chill, and the whole landscape was severe, lonely, and desolate. Sorèze is in the plain on the other side of the *Montagne Noire*, at the foot of gorges running up into the Cevennes; at the head of these gorges are the basins from which the *Canal du Midi*—the great canal uniting the Mediterranean with the Atlantic—is fed. It was seven o'clock when we drove up the street, shaded with large trees, of Sorèze; my fellow-travellers showed me the way to the school, as I was obliged to get away early the next morning, and wanted, therefore, to make my visit that evening. The school occupies the place of an old abbey, founded in 757 by Pepin the Little; for several hundred years the abbey had been in the possession of the Dominicans, when, in Louis the Sixteenth's reign, a school was attached to it. In this school the king took great interest, and himself designed the dress for the scholars. The establishment was saved at the Revolution by the tact of the Dominican who was then at its head; he resumed the lay dress and re-

turned, in all outward appearance, to the secular life, and his school was allowed to subsist. Under the Restoration it was one of the most famous and most aristocratic schools in France, but it had much declined when Lacordaire, in 1854, took charge of it. I waited in the monastic-looking court (much of the old abbey remains as part of the present building) while my card, with a letter which the Papal Nuncio at Paris, to whom I have been introduced through Sir George Bowyer's kindness, had obtained for me from the Superior of the Dominicans, was taken up to Lacordaire; he sent down word directly that he would see me; I was shown across the court, up an old stone staircase, into a vast corridor; a door in this corridor was thrown open, and in a large, bare room, with no carpet or furniture of any kind, except a small table, one or two chairs, a small bookcase, a crucifix, and some religious pictures on the walls, Lacordaire, in the dress of his order, white-robed, hooded, and sandalled, sat before me.

The first public appearance of this remarkable man was in the cause of education. The Charter of 1830 had promised liberty of instruction; liberty, that is, for persons outside the official hierarchy of public instruction to open schools. This promise M. Guizot's celebrated school law of 1833 finally performed; but, in the mean time, the authorities of public instruction refused to give effect to it. Lacordaire and M. de Montalembert opened in Paris, on the 7th of May, 1831, an independent free school, of which they themselves were the teachers; it was closed in a day or two by the police, and its youthful conductors were tried before the Court of Peers and fined. This was Lacordaire's first public appearance; twenty-two years later his last sermon in Paris was preached in the same cause; it was a sermon on behalf of the schools of the Christian Brethren. During that space of twenty-two years he had run a conspicuous career, but on another field than that of education; he had become the most renowned preacher in Europe, and he had re-established in France by his energy, conviction, and patience, the religious orders banished thence since the Revolution. Through this career I cannot now attempt to follow him; with the heart of friendship and the eloquence of genius, M. de Montalembert has recently written its history; but I must point out two characteristics which distinguished

him in it, and which created in him the force by which, as an educator, he worked—the force by which he most impressed and commanded the young. One of these was his passion for firm order, for solid government. He called our age an age “which does not know how to obey—*qui ne sait guère obéir*.” It is easy to see that this is not so absolutely a matter for reproach as Lacordaire made it; in an epoch of transition society may and must say to its governors, “Govern me according to my spirit, if I am to obey you.” One cannot doubt that Lacordaire erred in making absolute devotion to the Church (*malheur à qui trouble l'Eglise!*) the watchword of a gifted man in our century; one cannot doubt that he erred in affirming that “the greatest service to be rendered to Christianity in one day was to do something for the revival of the mediæval religious orders.” Still he seized a great truth when he proclaimed the intrinsic weakness and danger of a state of anarchy; above all, when he applied this truth in the moral sphere he was incontrovertible, fruitful for his nation, especially fruitful for the young. He dealt vigorously with himself, and he told others that the first thing for them was to do the same; he placed character above everything else. “One may have spirit, learning, even genius,” he said, “and not *character*; for want of character our age is the age of miscarriages. Let us form Christians in our schools, but, first of all, let us form Christians in our own hearts; the one great thing is *to have a life of ones own*.”

Allied to this characteristic was his other—his passion, in an age which seems to think that progress can be achieved only by our herding together and making a noise, for the antique discipline of retirement and silence. His plan of life for himself, when he first took orders, was to go and be a village curé in a remote province of France. M. de Quélen, the Archbishop of Paris, kept him in the capital as chaplain to the Convent of the Visitation; he had not then commenced the *conferences* which made his reputation; he lived perfectly isolated and obscure, and he was never so happy. “It is with delight,” he wrote at this time, “that I find my solitude deepening round me; ‘one can do nothing without solitude,’ is my grand maxim. A man is formed from within, and not from without. To withdraw and be with one's self

and with God is the greatest strength there can be in the world." It is impossible not to feel the serenity and sincerity of these words. Twice he refused to edit the *Univers*; he refused a chair in the University of Louvain. In 1836, when his fame filled France, he disappeared for five years, and these years he passed in silence and seclusion at Rome. He came back in 1841 a Dominican monk; again, at Notre Dame, that eloquence, that ineffable accent, led his countrymen and foreigners captive; he achieved his cherished purpose of re-establishing in France the religious orders. Then once more he disappeared, and after a short station at Toulouse consigned himself, for the rest of his life, to the labor and obscurity of Sorèze. "One of the great consolations of my present life," he writes from Sorèze, "is, that I have now God and the young for my sole companions." The young, with their fresh spirit, as they instinctively feel the presence of a great character, so, too, irresistibly receive an influence from souls which live habitually with God.

Lacordaire received me with great kindness. He was above the middle height, with an excellent countenance; great dignity in his look and bearing, but nothing ascetic; his manners animated, and every gesture and movement showing the orator. He asked me to dine with him the next day, and to see the school festival, the *fête des anciens élèves*; but I could not stop. Then he ordered lights, for it was growing dark, and insisted on showing me all over the place that evening.

While we were waiting for lights he asked me much about Oxford; I had already heard from his old pupils that Oxford was a favorite topic with him, and that he held it up to them as a model of everything that was venerable. Lights came, and we went over the establishment; the school then contained nearly three hundred pupils—a great rise since Lacordaire first came in 1854, but not so many as the school has had in old times. It is said that Lacordaire at first resorted so frequently to expulsion as rather to alarm people. Sorèze, under his management, chiefly created interest by the sort of competition which it maintained with the lycées, or state schools. A private school of this kind, in France, cannot be opened without giving notice to the public authorities; the consent of these authorities is withheld if the premises of the proposed school are improper, or if its director fails to produce a

certificate of probation and a certificate of competency—that is, if he has not served for five years in a secondary school, and passed the authorized public examination for secondary teachers. Finally, the school is always subject to state inspection, to ascertain that the pupils are properly lodged and fed, and that the teaching contains nothing contrary to public morality and to the laws; and the school may be closed by the public authorities on an inspector's report, duly verified. Still, for an establishment like the Sorèze school the actual state interference comes to very little; the minister has the power of dispensing with the certificate of probation, and holy orders are accepted in the place of the certificate of competency (the examination in the seminary being more difficult than the examination for this latter). In France the state (Machiavel, as we English think it), in naming certain matters as the objects of its supervision in private schools, means what it says, and does not go beyond these matters; and, for these matters, the name of a man like Lacordaire serves as a guarantee, and is readily accepted as such. All the boys at Sorèze are boarders, and a boarder's expenses here exceed by about eight pounds or ten pounds a year his expenses at a lycée. The programme of studies differs little from that of the lycées, but the military system of these state schools Lacordaire repudiated. Instead of the vast common dormitories of the lycées, every boy had his little cell to himself; that was, after all, as it seemed to me, the great difference. But immense stress was laid, too, upon physical education, which the lycées are said too much to neglect. Lacordaire showed me with great satisfaction the stable, with more than twenty horses, and assured me that all the boys were taught to ride. There was the *salle d'escrime*, where they fenced, the armory full of guns and swords, the shooting-gallery, and so on. All this is in our eyes a little fantastic, and does not replace the want of cricket and football in a good field, and of freedom to roam over the country out of school hours; in France, however, it is a good deal; and then twice a week all the boys used to turn out with Lacordaire upon the mountains, to their great enjoyment, as the Sorèze people said, the Father himself being more vigorous than any of them. And the old abbey school has a small park adjoining it, with the mountains rising close be-

hind, and it has beautiful trees in its courts, and by no means the dismal barrack-look of a lyceum. Lacordaire had a staff of more than fifty teachers and helpers, about half of these being members of his own religious order—Dominicans; all co-operated in some way or other in conducting the school. Lacordaire used never to give school-lessons himself, but scarcely a Sunday passed without his preaching in the chapel. The highest and most distinguished boys formed a body called the *Institute*, with no governing powers like those of our sixth form, but with a sort of common-room to themselves, and with the privilege of having their meals with Lacordaire and his staff. I was shown, too, a *Salle d'Illustres*, or Hall of Worthies, into which the boys are introduced on high days and holidays; we should think this fanciful, but I found it impressive. The hall is decorated with busts of the chief of the former scholars, some of them very distinguished. Among these busts was that of Henri de Larochefjacquelin (who was brought up here at Sorèze), with his noble, speaking countenance, his Vendean hat, and the heart and cross on his breast. There was, besides, a theatre for public recitations. We ended with the chapel, in which we found all the school assembled; a Dominican was reading to them from the pulpit an edifying life of a scapegrace converted to seriousness by a bad accident, much better worth listening to than most sermons. When it was over, Lacordaire whispered to me to ask if I would stay for the prayers or go at once. I stayed: they were very short and simple; and I saw the boys disperse afterwards. The gayety of the little ones and their evident fondness for the Père was a pretty sight. As we went out of the chapel, one of them, a little fellow of ten or eleven, ran from behind us, snatched, with a laughing face, Lacordaire's hand, and kissed it; Lacordaire smiled, and patted his head. When I read the other day in M. de Montalembert's book how Lacordaire had said, shortly before his death, "I have always tried to serve God, the Church, and our Lord Jesus Christ; besides these I have loved—oh, dearly loved!—children and young people," I thought of this incident.

Lacordaire knew absolutely nothing of our great English schools, their character, or recent history; but then no Frenchman, except a very few at Paris who know more than any-

body in the world, knows anything about anything. However, I have seen few people more impressive; he was not a great modern thinker, but a great Christian orator of the fourth century, born in the nineteenth; playing his part in the nineteenth century not so successfully as he would have played it in the fourth, but still nobly. I would have given much to stay longer with him, as he kindly pressed me; I was tempted, too, by hearing that it was likely he would make a speech the next day. Never did any man so give one the sense of his being a natural orator, perfect in ease and simplicity; they told me that on Sunday, when he preached, he hardly ever went up into the pulpit, but spoke to them from his place "*sans façon*." But I had an engagement to keep at Carcassone at a certain hour, and I was obliged to go. At nine I took leave of Lacordaire and returned to the village inn, clean, because it is frequented by the relations of pupils. There I supped with my fellow-travellers, the old scholars; charming companions they proved themselves. Late we sat, much *vin de Cahors* we drank, and great friends we became. Before we parted, one of them, the Beziers youth studying at Paris, with the amiability of his race assured me (God forgive him!) that he was well acquainted with my poems. By five the next morning I had started to return to Castelnaudary. Recrossing the *Montagne Noire* in the early morning was very cold work, but the view was inconceivably grand. I caught the train at Castelnaudary, and was at Carcassone by eleven; there I saw a school, and I saw the old *city* of Carcassone. I am not going to describe either the one or the other, but I cannot forbear saying, Let everybody see the *cité de Carcassone*. It is, indeed, as the antiquarians call it, the Middle Age Hereulaneum. When you first get sight of the old city, which is behind the modern town—when you have got clear of the modern town, and come out upon the bridge over the Aude, and see the walled *cité* upon its hill before you—you rub your eyes and think that you are looking at a vignette in *Ivanhoe*.

Thus I have enabled, as far as I could, the English reader to see what a French lyceum is like, and what a French private school, competing with a lyceum, is like. I have given him, as far as I could, the facts; now for the application of the facts. What is the problem respecting secondary instruction which we in this country have to solve? What light do these facts throw upon that problem? The answer to these questions I must reserve for a second paper.